

Inventory Number _____

REGISTER OF HISTORIC KANSAS PLACES---COVER LET

Name of Property Chanute Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Passenger Depot

Location 111 North Lincoln Avenue
(street and number)

Chanute

(city, town, or vicinity location)

Block 21 and part of Block 8 in Town of New Chicago and part of vacated Oak Street lying
between said Blocks 21 and 8.
(legal description)

Neosho

(county)

Owner of Property City of Chanute

Memorial Building

(street and number)

Chanute, Kansas (Neosho)

(city, town, county)

National Register status:

date approved for nomination to the National Register by Kansas Historic
Sites Board of Review N/A

date entered in National Register N/A

Description: See attached page.

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Santa Fe Railroad Depot in Chanute, Kansas, is a two story pressed brick building with an attic and a three story center tower. The building measures approximately 232 feet wide, 97 feet in depth at the north elevation and 49 feet in depth at south elevation.

The original facade consists of a rectangular central block that is comprised of eight bays, which is flanked on either side by projecting side wings, both four bays in width. In the original drawings published in contemporary issues of The Chanute Daily Tribune the side wings are reversed, the north wing on the south and south projection on the north.

Entry is gained at the left of the central block through an arcade consisting of three Romanesque arches supported by heavy brick piers resting on stone plinths and terminating in simplified Tuscan caps. Each arch is punctuated with stone keystones at the apex. Circular brick roundels ornament the spandrel areas between each arch. Originally, the arcade consisted of six arches, however, the arcade area of three of the arches at the north end were enclosed in brick for additional office space. At the top of the arcade is a brick and iron balustrade extending the full length of the central block.

Stone beltcoarses delineate the lower most portion of both the first and second story and extend the full perimeter of the structure.

Windows on both the first and second stories are rectangular, double hung, one over one (1/1), and rest on stone sills. All of the windows are decorated at top center with stone keystones.

The first story at both the rear (west or track side) and side elevations is protected by a broad overhang supported by ornate iron brackets.

A square central tower rises three stories from the center of the rear elevation. The third or uppermost story on its three windowed sides has a continuous stone shelf resting on stone brackets. (The shelf once supported an iron guardrail.) Brick turrets projecting from each corner of the tower extend upward from the third story to a height slightly above the eave of the tower roof.

The tower roof is pyramidal and the other roofs are hipped. All roofs are surfaced in slate and each roof level contains four semi-circular dormers trimmed in metal.

There have been three major additions to the depot. A 39 x 40 foot addition was added to the southern end of the building and a 42 x 42 foot addition was built at the north end. Originally, the north projecting wing was half two stories and half one story with a dormer. This wing is now completely two stories and may have been extended. All of these additions are proportional and were constructed with the same type of materials, trim, and ornaments as the original structure. This may indicate the additions were built within a few years after the original structure. There is a difference in the color of the slate roofing material used on the additions.

Other alterations to the building include the freight door in the middle of the lower story of the southern projection being bricked in and two windows placed in the opening. This probably was done at the time the additions were built since the one on south was used for Railway Express. Three windows on the east side in the lower story of the northern projected wing have been bricked in.

In regard to the interior of the depot, on the lower level, left (south) of center of the central block, the passenger waiting room and ticket counter are intact. The area on the north side of the lower level housed the Harvey House restaurant was many years ago converted into offices. The present trainmaster's office was originally one of the walk-in ice boxes for the Harvey House.

The second level area that originally held the division offices has been vacant for many years. The area on the north side of the second level that originally were the living quarters for the Harvey House manager and waitresses (the "Harvey girls") is presently used to store supplies for an emergency hospital.

The third level of the center tower, from which originally the yardmaster observed operations in the switching yard, is vacant.

Significance See attached pages.

Form prepared by Martha Hagedorn/ Bob Hosack (Sponsor) date July 2, 1987

This property was approved for listing in the Register of Historic Kansas Places by the
Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review on August 22, 1987

I hereby certify that this property is included in the Register of Historic Kansas Places.



State Historic Preservation Officer

August 22, 1987

Date

The development of the railroads in Kansas during the last half of the nineteenth century was a strong stimulus for settlement. Many towns owe their beginnings to the prior construction of railroad lines. One such town is Chanute, Kansas (inc. 1873).

In 1870 the Leavenworth, Lawrence and Galveston Railroad Company (L.L. & G.) and the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad Company (Katy) constructed the first railroad lines through Neosho County. The L.L. & G. and Katy jointly provided an impetus for the establishment of a town when at that point their railroad lines crossed. The fact that the crossing gave access to two railroads, which offered more economic opportunities than one railroad, was not overlooked by some land speculators, merchants, and settlers.

Eventually, there would be other railroad crossings in Neosho County, but none would have the importance of this particular crossing. The factor that made this crossing significant was not only was it the first in Neosho County but also in southeast Kansas. In addition, the later railroad crossings were usually the result of spur lines being constructed and were often made in close proximity to existing towns.

In 1879 the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company, commonly known simply as the Santa Fe, acquired control of the Leavenworth, Lawrence and Galveston Railroad Company and began operating it under the name of the Kansas City, Lawrence and Southern Kansas Railroad Company. This subsidiary company was soon renamed the Southern Kansas Railway Company, which by 1900 came to be known as the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company, Southern Kansas Division. (Later, the line became part of the Santa Fe's Eastern Division, which in 1986 was abolished, at which time it became part of the Kansas City (Kansas) Division. During the late 1880s the Santa Fe made a decision concerning their subsidiary company that had a tremendous impact upon the development pattern and growth of Chanute.

In 1886 the Santa Fe decided to move the division headquarters of the Southern Kansas Railway Company from Ottawa to Chanute. On November 4th of that year a representative of the company met with city officials and announced their intention to build a roundhouse in Chanute that could handle eighteen locomotives, machine shops, a switching yard with sixteen lines, and other improvements if certain concessions were granted. The railroad company wanted to purchase sixty acres of land along their line south from Main Street and to close all streets and alleys crossing that land. They also requested \$1,500 for the removal of the stone and wood structure that housed W.W. Royster's grain elevator and permission to construct a depot on the site, which was located approximately in the middle of the Santa Fe's present right-of-way, southerly of Main Street and to the north of First Street, if it had been extended across the right-of-way. Chanute quickly granted the concession requests and thus began its "railroad town" era, which lasted into the 1960's.

The availability of railroad service and the discovery of natural gas and oil in the area caused an economic boom at the turn of the century, which resulted in numerous industries and businesses being located in Chanute. This increase in trade directly influenced the Santa Fe's decision

to build a new depot. The contractor was W.R. Carter of Lawrence, Kansas, and the construction was supervised by F.S. Williams. Construction of the depot began in August of 1902 and was completed by August of 1903. However, passenger trains did not stop at this depot until September 21, 1903. This depot not only served as the division headquarters, but since Chanute is the mid-way point between Tulsa and Kansas City where passenger trains stopped, it had a Harvey House Restaurant.

On April 30, 1971, a passenger train stopped at the depot for what may have been the last time. The depot was vacated in mid-December, 1983 and is presently owned by the City of Chanute. This structure, which was one of the most substantial depots in eastern Kansas and now is one of the last remaining, is the physical link to the era of when railroad passenger and freight services were essential elements in life and well being of a community--an era that has passed and may never return.